Authorial Stance in Academic Writing: Issues and Implications for Research in English Language Teaching

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ABSTRACT

Writers can start a dialogue with the reader to produce more engaging and persuasive texts and to comply with their own disciplinary practices by employing interaction features effectively. In this paper, first, interaction as a significant part of the rhetorical structure of academic discourse is presented and then, major approaches to this function of language are reviewed and clarified. Next, Hyland's 2005 model of academic interaction as a comprehensive and practical model for conducting research on stance in academic discourse is discussed. Finally, a number of recent studies on authorial stance in academic discourse along with their strong and weak points are presented and discussed to pinpoint gaps and to recommend new research areas in the field of English language teaching (ELT).

Keywords: *Authorial Stance, Academic Interaction, Academic Discourse, Academic Writing, ELT*

1. Introduction

Three major developments over the past 20 years, that is, changes in higher education which have given rise to greater importance of writing; the growth of English as the international language of research and scholarship; and the recognition of the centrality of academic discourses in the construction of knowledge, have caused the current interest in academic discourse, principally academic writing in English (Hyland & Paltridge, 2011).

English is now the lingua franca of academic discourse and as Vold (2006) notes, novices as well as established researchers must be able to express themselves in English if they want to be fully accepted members of the international academic community.

Academic journals are currently places where authors can be most visible and receive the most credit. Accordingly, "Publish in English or perish" (Gnutzmann, 2008, p. 84) has become the norm across a wide range of disciplines recently. However, since publication to a large extent depends on the degree of successful socialization into the target discourse community, many researchers, particularly those for whom English is a foreign or second language, feel the pressure to publish in English and this has led to a demand for writing for publication courses. Therefore, the study of academic discourse is becoming a central element in pedagogy (Hyland & Paltridge, 2011).

According to Swales (2004), Hyland (2016), and Tribble (2017), for publishing, what matters is not the distinction between native and non-native English speakers, but between experienced researcher and less experienced ones, that is, between those who know the academic norms in their discipline and those who are learning them. In other words, the publication of a research article depends heavily on how close it is to the practices of the experts and gatekeepers in a particular discipline and an awareness of the authorial self (Canagarajah, 2013; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2013).

Studies have revealed that the rejection of many papers by novice writers are not so much due to the serious lexical or syntactic errors, but rather because of problems with argumentation, consistency, linking ideas, use of hedges, authorial voice,

and in general because of violating the reviewers' expectations of academic discourse (Sionis, 1995; Flowerdew, 2001; Englander, 2006).

Writers can offer a credible representation of themselves and their work by showing solidarity with readers and also by evaluating their material and acknowledging alternative views in appropriate and accepted ways. It is recognized that written text apart from concerning people, places, and activities in the world, acknowledges, constructs, and negotiates social relations; in consequence, writing is viewed as a social engagement, that is, by creating social interactions, effective texts can be produced (Hyland & Tse, 2004). In academic writing, such interactions are accomplished through the systems of stance and engagement. The writers offer interpretations of their data and persuade readers of their claims using a variety of stance resources (Jiang & Hyland, 2015). The linguistic resources of stance include words or phrases which are used by academic writers to adopt a position and engage with readers (Hyland, 2009).

Problems in presenting an effective authorial stance have frequently resulted in poor evaluation of a writer's text and research potential. For instance, studies have revealed that in soft disciplines, novice writers often fail to keep a fine balance between being humble (i.e., acknowledging others' perspectives) and authoritative (i.e., expressing his/her own interpretations and points of view directly) and this has led to failure in publication in many cases (Barton, 1993; Hyland, 1998; Hood, 2004; Schleppegrell, 2004; Wu, 2007; Chang & Schleppegrell, 2011; Chang, 2015).

All in all, stance is a significant element of academic discourse and disciplinary context and of a writer's argument. Stance helps the writers start a dialogue with the reader and employ their own disciplinary practices in order to produce more engaging and persuasive texts. Consequently, there seems to be an urgent need for research that investigates stance taking patterns in academic discourse in order to provide data for teaching and practicing such interactive resources of language in context as current English for academic purposes research (EAP) has argued for the need to shift to discursive practice when advanced academic writing instruction is involved (Hood, 2004, 2006; Charles, 2007; Pho, 2008).

However, as Hyland (2005) points to, writer stance in academic writing is still a poorly understood field and more in-depth investigations need to be conducted in this regard. Accordingly, this paper tries to shed light on the significance of studying stance taking patterns in academic discourse by clarifying on the issues first and then by pinpointing the gaps in previous studies and introducing new path for research. In the following sections, first, the importance of interaction in academic discourse is brought to light, second, the definitions of stance are provided, third, different stance features and categorizations based on Hyland's 2005 model of academic interaction are introduced, and finally, stance studies in recent years are reviewed to guide research that can be beneficial in English language teaching (ELT) particularly in advanced academic writing courses.

2. Interaction in Academic Writing

In Hyland's (2003) words, currently, viewing knowledge as knowing independently existing truths and texts as objective representations of those truths seems naive to many scholars. Over the past 20 years, research on academic writing has revealed that academic writing embodies interactions between readers and writers and is not a faceless discourse. This view enables writers to support the significance and originality of their work and to attain acceptability of their claims (Thompson, 2001; Hyland, 2002, 2005).

Academic writing is no longer viewed as an objective and impersonal kind of discourse which is designed to deal simply with the presentation of facts. Writing is, thus, more than just communication of ideas and presentation of ideational meaning; rather, it is viewed as a social engagement which involves writers' and readers' interactions. The writer can construct the text effectively only when he/ she assesses the readers' resources for interpretation of the text and also their possible responses to it (Hyland, 2005). Studies so far have revealed four main features for academic discourse:
1. Academic genres are persuasive and systematically structured to secure readers' agreement;
2. These ways of producing agreement represent disciplinary specific rhetorical preferences;
3. Language groups have different ways of expressing ideas and structuring arguments;

4. Academic persuasion involves interpersonal negotiations as much as convincing ideas. (Hyland, 2011, p. 177)

Thus, academics not only produce texts that represent the external realities and facts, but use language to persuade and negotiate interpersonal meanings and attitudes as well (Hyland & Paltridge, 2011). According to McGrath and Kuteeva (2012), in academic writing, the authors both present knowledge and leave a personal stamp on the text. As they state,

… while an author of a research article does indeed inform readers of the facts or processes leading to a scientific discovery, he or she also conveys an attitude towards the reliability or potential impact of the result, and its position in the existing canon. Furthermore, the author seeks to guide the reader through the material and micro-manages their interpretations, anticipating possible objections and highlighting key features. (pp. 162-163)

As academic writing is currently regarded as a persuasive work replete with the perspectives of the author, academic writers need to be aware of the rhetorical and discoursal conventions used by professionals in the community in order to enter and to join the academic world (Swales, 1990). According to Kroll (2001), producing a successful written text requires not only the ability to control over a number of language systems, but also the ability to take into consideration the ways the discourse is shaped for a particular audience and for a particular purpose.

Interaction in academic discourse has become a recurrent subject of inquiry and considerable attention has turned to the features which help the author realize the interpersonal and evaluative dimension of the texts (Hyland & Paltridge, 2011). The linguistic resources that convey a speaker's or writer's personal attitudes and assessments have been of interest to many researchers and several major approaches to this function of language have been taken including evidentiality (Chafe, 1986), affect (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1989), stance (Biber & Finegan, 1989; Hyland, 2005), hedging (Hyland, 1998), evaluation (Thompson & Hunston, 2000), and appraisal (Martin, 2000; Martin & white, 2005).

A review of the literature on interaction reveals that the notion of stance has remained elusive due to the diversity in definitions and categorizations of the concept (Adams & Quintana-Toledo, 2013). Next section will focus on the major approaches and definitions in this regard to elucidate the concept of stance in academic discourse.

3. Major Approaches to Stance

Originally, the concept of stance developed out of the notion of evidentiality that was proposed by Chafe and Nichols (1986); Gray & Biber (2012). According to Chafe and Nichols, evidentiality is using linguistic strategies to understand the source of information, the assessment of its reliability, and the truth of an assertion. In other words, evidentiality refers to the status of the knowledge in the propositions; in fact, an evaluation of knowledge is achieved through evidentiality (Chafe, 1986). Chafe outlines four major components of attitudes towards knowledge: the degree of reliability of knowledge, the source of knowledge, the manner in which the knowledge was acquired, and the appropriateness of the verbal resources for marking evidential meaning (pp. 262-263).

Some researchers also focused on the linguistic realizations of affect, that is, "feelings, moods, dispositions, and attitudes associated with persons and/or situations" (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1989, p. 7). The resources which indicate the intensity of an utterance and those which specify a particular attitude or emotion are two types of affect markers identified by Ochs and Schieffelin. This approach is concerned with how affect, including the feelings, moods, dispositions, and attitudes, is displayed through linguistic signals.

Biber and Finegan (1989) realized that functions of evidentiality and affect both were attributable to the same grammatical devices in English and proposed a broader model of stance which encompassed the two concepts, personal attitudes and emotions as well as assessments of the status of knowledge. Biber and Finegan (1989) categorized such linguistic features into affective and evidential meanings. Affective meanings could be either positive (e.g. enjoy, happily) or negative (e.g. unnatural, embarrasses), and evidential meanings could point to a level of certainty (e.g. impossible, without doubt, will) or doubt (e.g. uncertain, maybe, should).

Later on, a distinction was made between epistemic stance (evidentiality) and attitudinal stance (affect) and a third category to indicate style of speaking was added to the framework (Biber, 2006; Biber & Conrad, 2009). Meanings of certainty, doubt, actuality, precision or limitation, as well as indicators of the source or perspective of knowledge were called

epistemic stance; features indicating attitudes, evaluations, and personal feelings or emotions were included in attitudinal stance; and, the speaker's/writer's comments on the communication were called style of speaking (Biber & Conrad, 2009).

Hedges and boosters in academic writing were specifically analyzed by Hyland (1998, 1999, 2000). By hedging, he means the markers that limit commitment to a proposition, and by boosting, he means the expressions which indicate a high degree of certainty towards a proposition.

Hyland (2005) proposed an overall framework of interaction in academic writing. This framework focuses on stance in academic writing and specifies the way by which academic writers "annotate their texts to comment on the possible accuracy or credibility of a claim, the extent they want to commit themselves to it, or the attitude they want to convey to an entity, a proposition, or the reader." (p. 178).

According to Hyland (2005, p. 178) stance has three main components, evidentiality, affect, and presence. By evidentiality, he refers to the "writer's expressed commitment to the reliability of the propositions he or she presents and their potential impact on the reader"; affect refers to a "range of personal and professional attitudes towards what is said, including emotions, perspectives and beliefs"; and presence is "the extent to which the writer chooses to project him or herself into the text." Hyland's framework of stance includes these components through the use of *hedges*, *boosters*, *attitude markers*, and *self- mentions* (p.178).

Evaluation was proposed by Thompson and Hunston (2000). They defined evaluation as "the expression of the speaker or writer's attitude or stance towards, viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about." (p. 5). Evaluation is necessarily comparative, subjective, and value-laden. Evaluation is realized through the use of a combination of lexis and grammar along with the buildup of values within the text (Thompson & Hunston, 2000).

For expressing the writer's positive or negative opinions, according to Thompson and Hunston, there are four parameters of evaluation, namely, certainty/ likelihood, desirability/ goodness, obviousness/ expectedness, and importance/ relevance. Among which certainty and desirability are the central parameters of evaluation. Certainty shows how certain the writer is about the information in the text and is usually realized through grammatical items like modal verbs. Desirability expresses how desirable the writer thinks the information is and mostly is expressed through lexis such as attitudinal adjectives (Thompson & Hunston, 2000).

Closely related in concept to what Thompson and Hunston called evaluation is appraisal proposed by Martin and White (2005). Appraisal model is situated within Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which as Schleppegrell (2004) states, aims at explicitly elucidating what type of lexico-grammatical choices are used to fulfill specific type of meaning. Appraisal model concerns attitude (the way the writer conveys values), engagement (the projection of authorial voice and stance), and graduation (the force with which the writer adjusts his/her evaluation) (Martin, 2000; Martin & White, 2005). As Gales (2011) points to, appraisal consists of three systems of attitude, evaluation, and graduation. Attitude encodes feelings and emotions; evaluation is concerned with the judgment of behaviors; and graduation characterizes the strength of utterances.

According to Chang (2010), among the theoretical constructs discussed above Biber's (2006) and Hyland's (2005) models are more pedagogically oriented, both used concordance tools to explore the probability of lexical or lexico-grammatical resources, and both are concerned with academic discourse. However, Biber focuses mostly on the lexico-grammatical level than on the discursive one.

Moreover, as Pho (2013) indicates, Hyland's (2005) definition of stance is more comprehensive than other definitions of stance in the literature since it covers not only what other researchers refer to as authorial stance but also what some authors call writer identity, authorial voice or authorial presence. Hyland's (2005) model includes many dimensions of stance such as personal/ impersonal, present/ absent, overt/ covert, explicit/ implicit, subjective/ objective, involved/ detached, or concrete/ abstract (Pho, 2013). Hyland's framework thus seems to be more practical and appropriate for the purpose of discourse studies in ELT since it is highly comprehensive and is concerned with academic writing at discursive level. The following section will focus on this model.

4. Hyland's Model of Academic Interaction

Through the writer–reader interaction, writers establish relationships between people and also between people and ideas. As Hyland (2005) sets forth, these interactions are managed by writers in two main ways: stance and engagement.

Stance resources are those which express a textual voice or community recognized personality. As the attitudinal dimension of discourse, stance includes the resources through which "writers present themselves and convey their judgments, opinions, and commitments. It is the ways that writers intrude to stamp their personal authority onto their arguments or step back and disguise their involvement" (Hyland, 2005, p. 176).

Through engagement, writers acknowledge and connect to others, recognize the presence of their readers, pull them along with their argument, focus their attention, acknowledge their uncertainties, include them as discourse participants, and guide them to interpretations. The key resources of academic interaction are realized in Figure: 1 adapted from Hyland (2005, p.177) and are explained in the following section.
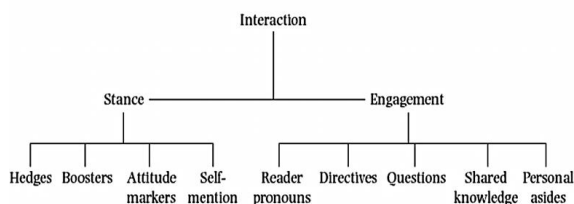

Figure 1: Key resources of academic interaction

As shown in the figure 1, stance includes four main elements: hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mentions (p.178). Such elements deal with writer-oriented features of the interaction. In other words, through stance features, writers express all personal and professional attitudes towards what is said and commitment to the reliability of the presented propositions and also determine the degree of their projection into the text.

Hedges help the writer withhold complete commitment to a proposition, put emphasis on the subjectivity, and present information as an opinion rather than credited fact. Hedges "imply that a statement is based on plausible reasoning rather than certain knowledge" (Hyland, 2005, p.179). Hedges also assist writers in claim-making and allow them to create a discursive space "where readers can dispute their interpretations" (p.179). Examples of hedges are presented in the text below taken from Hyland (2005):

Our results suggest that rapid freeze and thaw rates during artificial experiments in the laboratory may cause artifactual formation of embolism. Such experiments may not quantitatively represent the amount of embolism that is formed during winter freezing in nature. In the chaparral at least, low temperature episodes usually result in gradual freeze-thaw events. (p.179)

As Hyland states, boosters allow writers to express certainty in what they say and to mark involvement with the topic and solidarity with the audience. Unlike hedges, boosters help writers express ideas with assurance and narrow diversity of opinions rather than expanding it. Since hedges and boosters balance objective information and create space for subjective evaluation and interpersonal negotiation, they can help writers gain acceptance for claims (Hyland, 2005). Instances of boosters are provided in the paragraph below:

This brings us into conflict with Currie's account, for static images surely cannot trigger our capacity to recognize movement. If that were so, we would see the image as itself moving. With a few interesting exceptions we obviously do not see a static image as moving. Suppose, then, that we say that static images only depict instants. This too creates problems, for it suggests that we have a recognitional capacity for instants, and this seems highly dubious. (p. 179)

Attitude markers show the writer's affective rather than epistemic attitude to propositions. Through attitude verbs, sentence adverbs, and adjectives, writers can express surprise, agreement, importance, frustration, and so on (Hyland, 2005). The sentence below (Hyland, 2005, p.180) presents an example of the attitude markers:

The first clue of this emerged when we noticed a quite extraordinary result.

Self-mention refers to the use of first possessive adjectives and person pronouns to present propositional, affective and interpersonal information in the text (Hyland, 2001). In order to adopt a particular stance and disciplinary-situated authorial identity, writers consciously decide on the presence or absence of explicit author reference (Hyland, 2005). As you can see in the text below the author emphasizes his/ her own contribution to the field to pursue agreement for it (Hyland, 2005, p. 181):

I argue that their treatment is superficial because, despite appearances, it

relies solely on a sociological, as opposed to an ethical, orientation to develop a response. Table 1 presents some examples of stance resources in academic research articles based on Hyland's model.

Table 1: Examples of Stance Resources in Academic Research Articles

Resources	Examples
Hedges	possible, might, perhaps, …
Boosters	clearly, demonstrate, beyond doubt, …
Attitude markers	agree, hopefully, remarkable, …
Self-mentions	I, my, our, mine, your, the author, …

According to Hyland (2005), reader pronouns, personal asides, appeals to shared knowledge, directives, and questions are five main elements of engagement (p.182). Reader pronouns are the clearest way through which a writer can acknowledge the reader's presence. Personal asides help the writers address readers directly by interrupting the argument to offer a comment on what has been said. Appeals to shared knowledge refer to the presence of explicit markers where readers are asked to recognize something as familiar or accepted. Directives are used to instruct the reader to perform an action or to see things as determined by the writer. And finally, questions offer dialogic involvement, invite engagement, and lead the readers to the writer's viewpoint.

Table 2 presents some examples of engagement resources in academic research articles based on Hyland's model (pp. 182-186).

Table 2: Examples of Engagement Resources in Academic Research Articles

Resources	Examples
Reader Pronouns	you, your, inclusive we
Personal Asides	And – as I believe many TESOL professionals will readily acknowledge – critical thinking has now begun to make its mark, particularly in the area of L2 composition.
Appeals to Shared Knowledge	This measurement is distinctly different from the more familiar NMR pulsed field gradient measurement of solvent self-diffusion.
Directives	consider, note, imagine, …
Questions	What do these two have in common, one might ask? The answer is that they share the same politics.

Recent investigations on the expression of stance in different disciplines are presented in next section in order to clarify the gaps in stance studies particularly in ELT.

5. Recent Investigations

In recent years, authors have analyzed various ways in which writers express stance in academic writing in different disciplines. For instance, Hyland (2005) draws on both qualitative and quantitative approaches to analyze a corpus of 240 research articles from ten leading journals in eight disciplines in order to propose a model for academic interaction. The fields were mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, marketing, philosophy, sociology, applied linguistics, physics, and microbiology. The corpus was searched for specific features using a text analysis and concordance program, WordPilot 2000.

Based on the previous research on interactive features, a list of 320 search items was collected and all cases were examined functionally and double-checked by another expert. Using a semi-structured format, the experienced researcher/writers from the target disciplines were also interviewed using open-ended prompts which focused on their own and others' writing. Findings from the analysis and description of the corpus and also the interviews' data were then used to separate the key resources of stance and engagement, to reveal the functional differences, and to demonstrate the epistemological and social beliefs of disciplinary cultures.

The results also indicated that the distinctions between hard and soft sciences have real rhetorical effects. Finally, a model of how writers use linguistic resources to reflect the practices of their disciplinary communities and to represent themselves, their positions, and their readers was proposed.

Although Hyland's study examines stance in different academic disciplines and is one of the broadest studies in terms of the disciplinary scope including both hard and soft sciences, it is mostly quantitative and general in representing the patterns of the frequencies of stance resources across disciplines. Therefore, narrower studies are required to investigate stance taking patterns both qualitatively and quantitatively in context of specific disciplines.

Hyland and Tse (2005) examined functions of the evaluative that construction in abstracts of published research articles. The findings revealed that this construction was used to mark the introduction of the main argument, to summarize the purposes or direction of the research, and to indicate the reliability or validity of the proposition presented. However, the scope and the

findings of this study are limited to the abstract sections of research articles and only to one construction of stance taking.

In another study, Poudat and Loiseau (2005) examined stance in linguistics and philosophy through analysis of personal pronouns in research articles in French. They identified two specific styles of authorial presence, that is, a universalist stance in philosophical papers and a more personal or neutral stance in linguistic papers. This study reveals the disciplinary differences in patterns of stance taking.

Biber (2006) tried to extend the previous research on the use of stance in academic discourse by investigating the use of a wide range of lexico-grammatical features used for the expression of stance and description of major patterns of register variation within the university, comparing the marking of stance in academic versus student registers, within both speech and writing. The study revealed the importance of the expression of stance in all university registers. However, there were important register differences in the particular kinds of stance meanings that were expressed.

Auria (2008), arguing that soft sciences have been narrowly investigated with respect to the use of stance markers, examined the use of stance devices in the introduction sections of 20 articles in applied linguistics and information science. The analyses indicated discipline-specific conventions, however a similar number of stance devices were found in the two disciplines.

Baratta (2009) investigated the use of passive voice in revealing the writer's stance. Three essays of three undergraduates along with each student's dissertation were analyzed. Through a close contextual analysis of three undergraduate students' writings, examples of presenting the writers' stance using passive voice were identified and it was demonstrated that passive voice can be an indirect way for writers to reveal themselves within their essays. Furthermore, in order to provide greater accuracy regarding the ways in which passive voice can reveal the writers' feelings and also to understand more about the students' attitudes, the students completed questionnaires and were interviewed. Within the interviews, the students revealed a great deal of personal information about their language use and its influences. The results of the analyses revealed that passive voice plays a role with regard to writer stance which goes beyond the hiding of the author

and can help the authors reveal themselves. The study shows that one of the factors which needs consideration when determining patterns of stance taking is the writers' socio-cultural background.

Interpersonality in research article abstracts in the field of applied linguistics was analyzed in terms of the use of hedges, boosters, and attitude markers by Gillaerts and Van de Velde (2010). A quantitative analysis of the distribution of hedges, boosters, and attitude markers in abstracts when compared with their distribution in research articles supported the idea that abstracts have their own specific make-up linked to their function. The results also showed that the use of such resources in abstracts had undergone interesting changes in the course of time. The writers' final conclusion was that the degree of interpersonality realized by hedges, boosters and attitude markers had diminished over time, though notable differences existed with regard to the subcategories in the interactional domain. The study indicates that the patterns of stance taking change over time in terms of distribution; however, it is not stated whether there are differences in terms of functions and meanings or not.

Taki and Jafarpour (2012) followed Hyland's (2005) model of interaction to investigate the ways in which English and Persian academics expressed their position to discover the strategies used to involve readers in their writing. For the purposes of cross-linguistic and cross-disciplinary comparison, 120 English and Persian research articles in two disciplines of chemistry and sociology were analyzed. The results revealed that in both disciplines, the writers regarded the expression of stance and engagement markers important. However, in sociology articles and also in articles written in Persian, there were more cases of readers' involvement. Taki and Jafarpour applied merely quantitative analyses and ignored qualitative and functional analyses that can reveal more detailed information. Furthermore, their study investigated research articles in two disciplines of chemistry and sociology, thus the results cannot provide informative data for practitioners in the field of ELT.

Using a corpus-based approach, Chan (2015) drew on Biber's (2006) model to investigate the extent to which the frequencies of lexico-grammatical devices used for the expression of stance in acknowledgements varied across soft and hard disciplines. The analysis showed that

soft disciplines used more stance features than the hard disciplines. Notably, it was found that stance devices were motivated by different factors such as the nature of the research, the imbalance of the power and position between the writers and thanked addressees, the amount of assistance and support the writers received from different sources, and their strategic career choices. The study only compares acknowledgements across soft and hard disciplines and reveals their differences, but does not indicate how the results can inform pedagogy.

Jiang and Hyland (2015) focused on an overlooked means of expressing stance, noun complement structure. They explored the frequencies, forms and functions of this structure in a corpus of 160 research articles across eight disciplines. The results revealed the extensive use of the structure to express author comment and evaluation. It was also indicated that it was used to build knowledge across different disciplines.

Based on the appraisal theory, evaluative stance employed in the conclusion sections of English and Malay research articles were analyzed by Loi, Lim, and Wharton (2016). The findings demonstrated that evaluative and dialogic stances jointly produced rhetorical effects in both English and Malay conclusions. Malay conclusions contracted dialogic space and were less reader-friendly, while English conclusions showed a subtle balance of assertion and mitigation. This study suggests that stance patterns are used differently by scholars in international and local scientific communities because of linguistic, contextual, and potential social and cultural influences within the two discourse communities.

Aull, Bandarage, and Miller (2017) examined the use of some markers of generalization as a part of stance in new college writing, advanced student writing, and published academic writing. The study showed clear differences in the frequency, breadth, or scope of generalizations across the three corpora. Published academic writing contained the fewest generalization markers, while new college writing showed the most generalizations as well as generalizations that span large groups and periods of time. This indicates that new college students' use of generalization markers contrasts the patterns of stance taking in advanced student and published writing.

In another study Jalali (2017) examined a particular structural group of lexical bundles encoding stance expression in three corpora of research articles, doctoral dissertations, and master theses in applied linguistics. The functional analyses showed that the bundles contained stance expressions of hedging, marking attitude, stressing emphasis, attributing, and making epistemic meanings. It was also revealed that students' genres draw less on interpersonal meanings.

From the literature reviewed, a number of conclusions can be drawn about stance taking in academic writing. First, the literature informs that different disciplines show different patterns of stance taking (Hyland, 2005; Poudat & Loiseau, 2005; Auria , 2008; Taki & Jafarpour, 2012; Chan, 2015) ; second, cultural and social differences can influence the way writers express stance (Baratta, 2009; Loi et al., 2016) ; third, stance taking patterns of one community or discipline can change over time (Gillaerts &Van de Velde, 2010); and finally, apart from disciplinary and cultural influences, the practice of novice writers in employing stance features is usually different from experts in their fields (Biber, 2006; Aull et al., 2017; Jalali, 2017).

Aull et al. (2017) and Jalali (2017) noticeably show that novice writers face challenges when they express themselves and their opinions in the text and call for more explicit interventions in dealing with stance in academic writing instruction. According to Hyland (2004), student writers do not feel comfortable using stance markers as experts do, they refrain from using self-mentions to present themselves as an author, and their texts are more descriptive and devoid of stance.

6. Gaps in the Stance Research

The challenges of advanced academic writing are particularly associated to interpersonal meaning making. Writers need to show a desirable command of the interactional resources of the target language in order to make the text work within the given contexts. However, many novice writers encounter difficulty in making knowledge claims and in authorial stance-taking to establish a credible authorship.

This critical fact is usually neglected in the area of writing research and pedagogy and practitioners of the field have mostly emphasized the propositional content over the interpersonal features and strategies.

While explicit knowledge of rules is necessary for writing, it cannot be enough for writing effectively and coherently. So far, a great number of studies have compared the differences in various academic writing genres across disciplines and have identified the influences of disciplinary variations on how texts are constructed; however, writer stance in academic writing in specific disciplines such as ELT has not been paid enough attention to and needs to be investigated more thoroughly.

Although previous studies have provided much to the body of knowledge on academic stance, there are still a number of gaps which should be filled in. For instance, most authors, so far, have focused on quantitative analysis and on soft vs. hard disciplinary differences ignoring the functional analysis or the pedagogical dimension.

One of the most felt gaps in the field is that most studies have investigated stance taking patterns in research articles in applied linguistics as a discipline, but no single study has addressed ELT as a professional discipline. In addition, in spite of the fact that studies have indicated stance taking patterns are not only influenced by disciplinary and cultural norms, but are subject to time as well, most studies have ignored examining the use and change of stance taking patterns across time. Indeed, they typically have focused on one or some features of stance and also on the variations only across one single section of the articles.

Overall, further research is necessary in ELT to reveal some of the most important interaction resources that are needed to write successfully and also to gather linguistic evidence that informs writing assessment and instruction.

7. Implications for Research in ELT

As Hyland (2000) points out, for writing instruction, textual analyses need to be enhanced with "the insights gained from examining how writing is constructed, interpreted, and used by experienced members of the community in their everyday lives" (p. 149). In the same vein, conducting studies that address the above mentioned gaps in ELT can foster writing for publication practices and inform corpus-enhanced ESL/ EFL writing courses considerably as the data from experts' performances could introduce various resources of stance, their distributions, and functions to students and help them understand and use such resources

appropriately in their future writings. Accordingly, a shift of focus from linguistic features to discursive practice when advanced academic writing research and instruction is involved can contribute a lot to advanced ESL\ EFL writing courses.

Moreover, as studies have indicated, stance taking patterns are influenced not only by disciplinary and cultural norms, but are subject to time as well (Biber, 2004; Gillaerts &Van de Velde, 2010); thus, using them for pedagogical purposes needs access to the data on the patterns of use and change across time. Since there has not been one single study investigating the patterns of use and change of stance taking in ELT across a period of time, investigating change over time could add a great deal to the body of knowledge on academic discourse in this discipline and might raise discourse awareness not only among students but also among the syllabus designers and material developers in the field. In other words, investigating stance taking patterns in ELT during a period of time can open up new windows to academic discourse and genre theory and further can supply teaching practices, curriculum development, and materials preparation with highly authentic data on academic interaction in the field.

More importantly, studies should attempt to extract explicit and implicit conventions of stance taking in experts' practices to reveal distinctive ways and patterns of identifying issues, addressing and criticizing colleagues, and presenting arguments in ELT in order to provide a tangible framework for the new members of the community to make their writings familiar and persuasive, to control the level of personality in their texts, to assert unanimity with readers, to assess their material, and to acknowledge other views. As Tribble (1997) states, the corpus which offers a collection of expert performances is the most useful corpus for learners since the data from expert performances can embody the desired forms of language behavior that learners try to accomplish.

8. Sum Up

Stance, as one of the most significant concepts in applied linguistics today, is an attitudinal dimension which includes features that allow the writers to present themselves and to convey their judgments, opinions, and commitments (Guinda & Hyland, 2012). Since publishing in English is a criterion of promotion in this field and it is very important for graduate and postgraduate students of the field to publish

internationally, the appropriate use of stance resources in writing is part of disciplinary expertise expected from students. Thus, investigating experts' performances can provide very useful information for novices in the field in this regard.

Because of the linguistic and rhetorical differences between first and second language (Hyland, 2006) and an ineffective and inadequate English as second or foreign language (ESL/ EFL) pedagogy in preparing student writers to achieve an evaluative stance in presenting their work (Chang & Schleppegrell, 2011), there is usually a lack of stance in students' academic writings. Thus, more thoughtful pedagogical interventions are needed to help postgraduate students majoring in ELT improve their academic writing skills to be able to publish internationally. Providing disciplinary specific data through analyses of naturally occurring instances of stance can significantly contribute to such pedagogical interventions.

Overall, the results of previous research on stance taking patterns reveal that they are dynamic, that is, they change over time, are discipline-specific, and more importantly are different between novice and expert writers. Consequently, experts' patterns of stance taking in ELT over a period of time need to be explored in more detailed ways to provide authentic instructional materials and to raise stance awareness of the academic community in this field.

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